

JOHNSON STARTS SWEEPING SURVEY OF VIETNAM ROLE

McNamara and Lodge, Back
From Saigon Trip, Attend
White House Session

LONG TALKS SCHEDULED

Decision on Troops Is Due
—Some U.S. Aides Predict
a Build-Up to 200,000

By RICHARD EDER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 21

President Johnson began today to fashion a series of major decisions about the United States' military, political and economic involvement in Vietnam.

Six hours after the return of a high-level Saigon mission headed by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, the President began intensive discussions with his chief advisers on foreign policy and national security.

The discussion were described by Bill D. Moyers, the White House press secretary, as "a thorough and penetrating review of the many facets of the situation in South Vietnam."

The discussions, which will continue for several days, are expected to be the most searching and thorough analysis so far of the United States position in Vietnam.

New Phase in War

The talks are expected to produce a policy that will take the American war effort into a new phase. Mr. Johnson and his leading advisers have already said that this phase will include an increase in United States forces in Vietnam.

The size of the new military contingents, what they will try to accomplish, what their relationship will be with the South Vietnamese command, and how far Reserve and National Guard units in the United States may

have to be mobilized to back stop the fighting units are all questions that are expected to be answered in the next few days.

In Saigon, American officials declared that a final decision on troop strength rested with President Johnson, but some predicted that the total would rise from the present 73,000 to 200,000 by the beginning of 1966. Page 4.

In facing the question of how far to take the United States into a ground war, with all the domestic and international complications that such a step would involve, President Johnson is undertaking his most serious foreign-policy decision so far.

The size and caliber of the group that met with the President indicated this gravity. The men included Secretary McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, McGeorge Bundy, Presidential assistant for national security, and Adm. William F. Raborn, Director of Central Intelligence.

Other participants were Henry Cabot Lodge, the new Ambassador to South Vietnam; Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Carl T. Rowan, retiring director of the United States Information Agency; Leonard H. Marks, his successor; George W. Ball, Under Secretary of State; and several top Defense and State Department deputies.

Tomorrow the President is to meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Continuous meetings with those who came to the White House today were indicated by Mr. Moyers, who said that Mr. Johnson was going to spend "quite a bit of time over the next few days" seeing this group and individual members of it.

Mr. Moyers added that the President was not expected to go to Texas this weekend, indicating that the talks might stretch into Saturday and perhaps Sunday.

United States troop commitments and deployment were not discussed at the meetings today, according to Mr. Moyers. The matters discussed were economic assistance and reconstruction in South Vietnam, and an analysis of United States intelligence and propaganda efforts.

Mr. Moyers indicated that the military question would come up tomorrow at the meeting with the Chiefs of Staff. Statements by the President and Mr. McNamara, and two carefully publicized appeals for

more United States troops by intelligence agency shortly before South Vietnam and United States commanders in Vietnam, Mr. McNamara's trip, General Thi called on the United States to send a great number of troops. Informed American sources credited the reversal to the critical ratio of Government forces to Communist forces in the corps area.

Other questions involve the relationship of United States and Vietnamese commands. Some United States officials suspect that it will be necessary to set up joint commands in which inevitably the United States would play the major role. This could lead to a full-scale-over of the war by the United States, a prospect that no one here seems eager to contemplate.

Saigon Sees Big Build-up

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, July 21 — American and South Vietnamese officials were preparing today for at least doubling of United States forces in Vietnam despite Secretary McNamara's contention that no decision has been reached.

American officials in Saigon assert that a final decision rests entirely with President Johnson, but some of them talk of 200,000 United States troops in Vietnam shortly after the beginning of 1966.

South Vietnamese sources said their leaders had spoken to the Secretary in terms of the number of United States battalions they required. They indicated that 30 additional battalions, added to the equivalent of two and a half combat divisions now in the country, would raise to six divisions the strength of American combat forces by the end of 1965.

The American mission here is reported to believe that the Vietnamese have underestimated the number of support troops their request would entail.

Even South Vietnamese generals whose pride, xenophobia or concern for their countrymen's reaction has caused them to resist large rise in the number of American troops, have become convinced that such an increase is necessary.

Thi Shifts Position

Brig. Gen. Nguyen Khanh Thi, the army's I Corps commander, is one of the high officers who have reversed themselves.

General Thi, whose associations with Buddhist political leaders have caused concern within the American mission, was previously reluctant to see the bulk of the war effort assumed by Americans.

But in a memorandum conveyed through the Central In-

The memorandum said that the Americans must no longer concern themselves with the reaction of the Vietnamese people, that the need outweighed such political considerations.

Four Government soldiers for one guerrilla has become the ratio most authoritatively mentioned here as necessary to put down the particular Vietcong challenge. Leaders in Washington and Saigon had long felt that the 10-to-1 ratio often cited by students of guerrilla warfare was unnecessarily high in South Vietnam.

Nature of War Shifting
Now, with the Vietcong fighting more conventionally in units of battalion and regiment size, American planners have reduced their ratio to 4 to 1. Since Vietcong full-time and part-time strength is informally estimated at 200,000, that ratio would require 800,000 anti-Communist troops.

The Government has about 550,000 regular army and militia troops. The United States has 73,000 more in South Vietnam. Even the planned 100,000-man build-up in South Vietnamese ranks, which is running into difficulties, would leave the Government about 75,000 men short of its minimum needs.

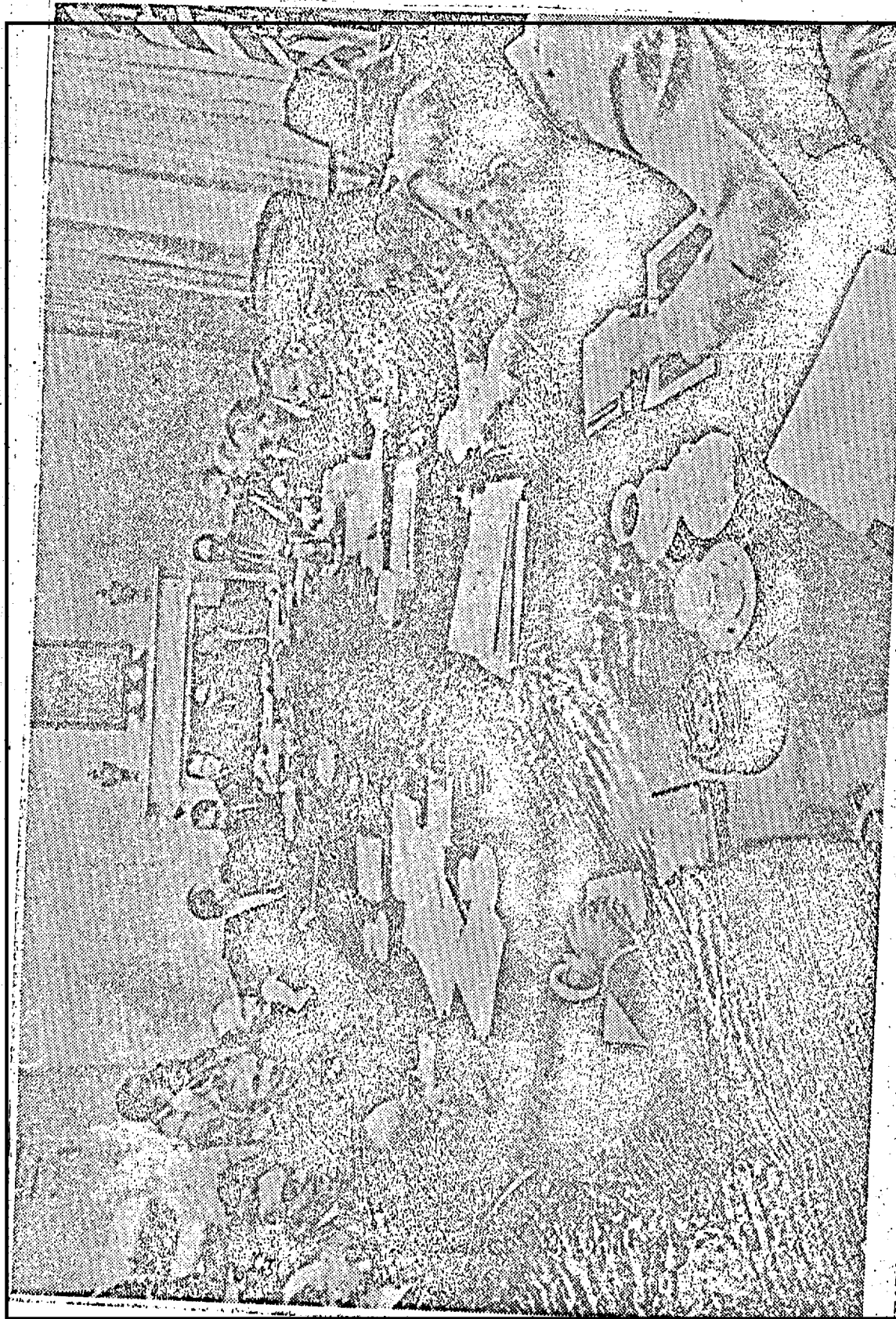
A debate in Washington and Saigon, according to highly placed sources, has centered on whether the Government should announce its planned increase when the figure has been set.

Officials have argued that a forthright statement about the number of men needed in Vietnam might rally the United States public behind the war effort. Others have contended that such a declaration might be premature and unnecessary since the American increases are based on current needs that could abate.

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HEAR McNAMARA REPORT. At White House, clockwise, from left: Carl T. Rowan, U.S.I.A. director; McGeorge Bundy, special Presidential assistant; Chester Cooper, Mr. Bundy's assistant; Henry Cabot Lodge, Ambassador-designate to South Vietnam; William F. Raborn Jr., C.I.A. director; Richard Helms, deputy director; Jack Valenti, Presidential aide; Horace Busby Jr., assistant, and Bill D. Moyers, press secretary.

United Press International Telephoto
To Mr. Moyers's left are, clockwise, to right: Leonard Unger, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs; William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs; Under Secretary of State George W. Ball; Secretary of State Rusk; President Johnson; Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara; Cyrus R. Vance, Deputy Secretary of Defense, and Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.